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ABSTRACT

The central tenet of Cummins' framework for intervention is that students from "dominated" social groups are either "empowered" or "disabled" as a direct result of their interactions with teachers. These interactions are mediated by the role definitions that educators assume in relation to certain institutional characteristics of schools. If the viability of Cummins' theoretical framework is accepted, multicultural methodology at colleges of education has to be reconsidered. Guided by Cummins' model and research literature, the curriculum and instructional methodology of a multicultural course was modified to emphasize growth in cultural sensitivity and acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to alter relationship structures. A Cultural Diversity Inventory (Henry) measuring individual attitudes, beliefs, and behavior towards children of culturally diverse backgrounds was administered to preservice teacher education students before and after taking the multicultural course. Students were also asked to select a preferred goal for multicultural education. Some goals and objectives for the course were: (1) to ensure that each student understands the professional responsibilities of teachers in a multiracial society; (2) to incorporate minority languages and cultures into the program; (3) to know the importance of achieving minority community participation; and (4) to know the importance of teachers becoming advocates of minority students in assessment procedures. Strategies for achieving these and other desired goals in the teacher education curriculum are suggested and results of the student questionnaires are noted. (80 references) (LL)

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Teacher Preparation: Implications of Cummins' Theoretical Framework for Analyzing Minority Students' School Failure

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the teacher education implications of Cummins' theoretical framework for analyzing minority students' school failure. Accepting the viability of this model which assigns a central role to teacher/student classroom interaction and school/community interaction it is suggested that the methodology used in teaching multicultural education may be crucial in determining the ultimate success or failure of minority students. Teachers' thinking, perceptions and beliefs are major factors in determining the nature of class relationships. The author offers an instructional methodology for developing the cultural sensitivity, knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to alter school relationship structures.

Teacher Preparation: Implications of Cummins' Theoretical Framework for Analyzing Minority Students' School Failure

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is to focus attention on the implications that Cummins' (1986; 1989) theoretical framework for analyzing minority students' school failure have for teacher education. It is the task of colleges of education to foster pre-service teacher understanding of the serious issues involved in the education of minority students. If Cummins' theory, which appears to be supported by sociological and anthropological research (Ogbu, 1987; Skuttnab-Kangas, 1984; Wong-Fillmore, 1983; Paulston, 1980) is accepted as a viable explanation of the problems with minority education it has direct implications for multicultural instructional methodology. The way we teach multicultural education to pre-service teachers may be a crucial factor in determining the ultimate success or failure of minority students. Teachers' thinking, knowledge, perceptions and beliefs will contribute to either the empowerment or the disabling of minority students.

PERSPECTIVE

It is a well established fact that schools in the United States are failing a disproportionate number of minority students. The academic outlook for black students in urban schools is especially bleak (Ladson-Billings, 1990). Statistics indicate that 22 of the 26 largest school districts in the country currently have a minority-majority school enrollment (Fernandez & Felez, 1985; *Education Week*, May 14, 1986). Demographic indicators project that 38% of the total public school student body will be minority in the year 2010 and a third of the American population will be minority in 2030 (Hodgkinson,

1989). These changes raise profound questions regarding the wisdom of maintaining the status quo-- especially the apparent tenacity in holding on to Eurocentric, Western cultural curricula and assessment procedures. Inequality regarding educational achievement and participation is visible across the total spectrum of education. Currently Afro-American students are dropping out of school at the rate of three in ten as opposed to a one in ten figure for white students. The figure for Hispanic students is four in ten, and for Native Americans five in ten (*Teacher Magazine*, April, 1990). Because of tracking practises a large numbers of minority students will never attend colleges (Fernandez &Felez, 1985; Grant, 1984). There are numerous concerns related to racial and cultural minority children in special education. Some of these identified by various researchers are: the overrepresentation of minority children in special classes, especially classes for mentally retarded children (Reschly, 1988); stigmatizing labels that are pinned on to many minority children (Smith et al., 1986); discriminatory assessment procedures (Clark-Johnson, 1988); and negative teacher attitudes toward the potential of minority children (Jones & Wilderson, 1976). Indications are that: disproportionate numbers of Black students are being placed in slower tracks or classified as educable mentally retarded (Clark, 1989; Reschly, 1988), Hispanic students are overrepresented in "learning disabilities" categories (Ortiz & Yates, 1983) and Native American school children are being diagnosed as having "emotional disorders" at the rate of twenty to twenty-five percent as opposed to a five to fifteen percent figure for Anglo children (Yates, 1987). In 1989 the reading and mathematics norms of Black and White students were reported to be sixty-four percent to eighty percent and sixty-five percent to eighty-three percent respectively (Sizemore, 1989). Finally, in many instances where minority students do manage to be successful it often comes at too great a psychological cost (Ladson-Billings, 1990). Use of a Eurocentric

Western culture curriculum, which requires "acting White" as a prerequisite for success, causes many to loose their cultural identity and become social isolates (McLaren, 1989).

It is especially disturbing to educators that these discrepancies exist in spite of the implementation of series of costly reforms over the past twenty-five years. Examples are the many preschool compensatory programs, the various bilingual education programs, the hiring of more remedial personnel and the numerous safe guard measures that have been introduced to prevent discriminatory assessment procedures (Cummins, 1986; 1989). American educators' apparent lack of enthusiasm for cultural diversity (McCarthy, 1990; O'Connor, 1990) has to be turned around. It is alarming that only fourteen percent of teachers recently surveyed expressed a desire to teach in culturally diverse schools (*Teacher Magazine*, April, 1990).

Visionary leadership is needed in teacher education. Scholars recognize that we are at a crossroads. The downward spiral of minority achievement in this country needs to be halted. While this will require a massive concerted effort on behalf of everybody involved with education teachers will be the crucial agents to affect change in the classrooms.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Cummins' (1986; 1989) theoretical framework for analyzing minority students' school failure is based on a series of hypotheses regarding the nature of the educational difficulties of minority students. In his prediction regarding the probable effectiveness of various interventions directed at reversing minority students' failure he suggests that schools are failing because the relationships between teachers and students and schools and minority communities have not altered in any significant way. His model assigns a central role to teacher/student classroom interaction, school and community interaction, and intergroup power relations. According to Cummins, the required changes in relationships

involve personal redefinitions of the way teachers interact with their students and with the communities from which the students come.

It should be recognized that teachers play a pivotal role in the classroom (McCarthy, 1990). Political and legislative reforms in and by themselves, will not be sufficient to solve the problems of minority school failures if educators do not redefine their roles with respect to students and communities (Cummins, 1986). What is needed is an important change in the school environment and in the school culture (Selakovich, 1978). Leichter (1973) argues for an exploration of the "cultural distance" in educational values between parents and teachers and asks to what extent the school reinforces, complements, contradicts or inhibits the efforts of the family and community and vice versa. it is known, for instance, that the development of a positive self image by native American Indians children consists of a complex pattern of interaction between child and community. Teacher and school recognition of the tribal culture bestows dignity upon the culture and encourages the development of positive self images by children who have to relate to both school and tribal culture (Burgess, 1978).

The central tenet of Cummins' framework for intervention is that students from "dominated" societal groups are either "empowered" or "disabled" as a direct result of their interactions with teachers. These interactions, he argues, are mediated by the role definitions that educators assume in relation to certain institutional characteristics of schools. These characteristics indicate the extent to which 1) minority students' culture and language are incorporated into the school curriculum; 2) minority community participation in the educational process is encouraged and recognized as an integral part of students' education; 3) learning and teaching strategies promote students' intrinsic motivation to actively use language in generating their own knowledge; 4) teachers

involved with assessment procedures reflect an advocacy policy towards minority students instead of legitimizing the location of the academic problem automatically within the minority student.

Cummins chose the three sets of relationships--educator/minority student relations, school/minority community relations, and majority/minority societal group relations on the basis of hypotheses regarding the relative ineffectiveness of numerous expensive educational reforms to reverse minority school failure.

If the viability of this theoretical framework is accepted multicultural instructional methodology at colleges of education has to be reconsidered. How are we teaching multicultural education? What goals are we striving for? Which model are we using? How motivated are the students whom we are sending out in the field? How do students define their role as classroom teachers? What competencies and characteristics should preservice teachers have to create the kind of relationships needed to empower minority students?

We know intuitively that teachers' thinking, perceptions and beliefs will probably be the crucial factor in determining the nature of class relationships. Their' perceptions and beliefs about diverse student populations will determine their classroom behavior (Grant, 1985; Bennett & Harris, 1982; Washington, 1980; Rubovitch & Mahr, 1973; Brophy, 1974), and how they will use their cognitive skills and the content knowledge they have gained in preservice classes will largely be determined by their attitudinal approach to the classroom situation (Cortez, 1978). Research literature shows a high correlation between successful academic performance of minority students and educators' sensitivity (attitudes, and beliefs), knowledge of cultures, and application of cultural information (Sleeter & Grant, 1988; Banks, 1987; Gollnick & Chinn, 1986). Effective teachers in pluralistic settings often exhibit high levels of cultural sensitivity (Cruikshank, 1986; Campbell &

Farrell, 1985). Other research studies have found that warmer and more enthusiastic teachers produce students with greater achievement gains (Gollnick & Chinn, 1986). Brophy (1983) found that warmth of the teacher is especially important to students who are targets of prejudice and discrimination. The instructional methodology used in teaching multicultural education courses is crucial in promoting cultural sensitivity. Since multicultural education is an affective and qualitative phenomenon that depends much on individual thinking, perception and feeling chances are that certain methods may result in negative student outcomes. It is suggested that major goals of multicultural education in teacher training should be the fostering of cultural sensitivity, the teaching of competencies necessary to establish effective relationships, and the strengthening of teacher commitment to affect change. In depth knowledge of cultural differences, especially as it relates to learning, is of vital importance but without cultural sensitivity and personal motivation to actively work towards equity in our schools knowledge will not suffice.

METHODS

Guided by Cummins' model and research literature on cultural sensitivity the curriculum and instructional methodology of a multicultural course was modified. Major focus was shifted from knowledge of diversity and teaching methodology to growth in cultural sensitivity and the acquiring of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to alter relationship structures as outlined in Cummins' framework for intervention. A *Cultural Diversity Inventory* (Henry, 1985) measuring individual attitudes, beliefs and behavior towards children of culturally diverse backgrounds was administered to students before and after taking the course. The 28 item agree/disagree questionnaire addressed general cultural awareness, communication, assessments, and multicultural methods and materials. Students were also asked to select a preferred goal for multicultural education from a list of

five possibilities (Sleeter & Grant,1988). These procedures were repeated at the end of the semester. All planning, procedures and activities used in this course were based on the assumption that the majority of pre-service teachers care about children and wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people. A paragraph written by students on the first day of class answering the question "Why did you decide to become a teacher?" confirmed this assumption.

The following is an outline of suggested course goals and strategies to encourage the implementation of Cummins' proposed change in minority/school/community relationships for the empowerment of minority students.

A. Course Goals and Objectives.

General course goals may include that each student has 1) an understanding of the professional responsibilities of teachers in a multiracial society; 2) to know the importance of, and how to incorporate students' language and culture into the school program; 3) to know the importance of, and how to achieve minority community participation; 4) to know the importance of, and how to use a pedagogy that promotes intrinsic student motivation to use language actively; 5) to know the importance of, and how to to become advocates of minority students in assessment procedures; and 6) the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to foster teacher/school/ student/ community relationships that would lead to the "empowering" of culturally diverse students. Specific objectives would include: To help students to: 1) understand the concepts of culture and its implications for teaching and learning; 2) understand the goals, rationale and meaning of multicultural education, the problem of stereotypes, and the ethical and moral dilemmas that may be involved; 3) develop analytic and evaluative abilities to confront issues such as participatory democracy, racism, sexism an the parity of power; 4) understand linguistic variations, and diverse

learning styles as a basis for the development of appropriate teaching strategies; 5) understand individual differences that affect teaching and learning; 6) know the social and cultural elements which contribute to the formation of distinctive personalities and use this understanding to improve educational decisions regarding content and methods of teaching; 6) know how traditional curricula can be revised to include multicultural dimensions without sacrificing other basic skills, concepts and understandings; 7) establish multiple perspectives and empathy, including ethnic diversity, racism, minority views, global viewpoints and factors common to all cultures; 9) gain an understanding of educational decisions teachers have to make to enhance the learning environment.

B. Increasing the probability that minority students' language and culture will be incorporated in classrooms and in the school program.

Strategies designed for intervention are based on the hypothesis that a lack of awareness and understanding of negative consequences of omission, a dearth of cultural knowledge, and a critical unawareness of the extent of Eurocentric, Western cultural dominance of school curricula are largely responsible for teachers not incorporating minority students' language and culture into their classrooms.

a) *Incorporation of minority students' language:*

Extensive use of videos, readings, and research studies to illustrate the effects of 1) cultural/ linguistic incorporation (Ladson-Billings, 1990; Arias, 1986; Campos & Keatinge, 1984; Cummins, 1983; Rosier & Holm, 1980; Trueba, Guthrie & Au, 1981), and 2) the effects of successful bilingual education programs, and/or the lack of such programs (Hakuta & Diaz, 1985; Paradis & Lebrun, 1984; Cummins 1983, 1984; Alatis & Twaddell, 1976; Lambert, 1975) is suggested. The use of videos and films which provide students with an opportunity to vicariously experience the struggles of non-English

speaking American students, and gain some understanding of the emotional insecurity and alienation felt by culturally different students has been found to be a strong motivational factor to achieve the stated goal. Another effective strategy to establish empathy is to subject students to the discomfort of a simulated class in a foreign language-- complete with questions, a quiz, and culturally different classroom procedures.

b) *Incorporation of minority students' culture:*

To ensure that future teachers will incorporate minority students' culture into the school program care needs to be taken to provide pre-service teachers with: 1) an understanding of the importance of relationality and multivocality as central intellectual forces in the production of knowledge, 2) an opportunity to critically evaluate the monological nature of the school curriculum (McCarthy, 1990; Crichlow et al., 1990; Banks, 1988; Suzuki, 1984) and its tendency to avoid conflict and complexity (McCarthy, 1990; King & Anderson, 1980); 3) an understanding of the role of teachers' expectations on student achievement (Garcia, 1991; Dusek, 1985; Cooper & Tom, 1984) and an awareness of how teacher behavior may be interpreted or misinterpreted by students (Pambookian, 1976); 4) a clear understanding of the curricular implications of stages of ethnicity (Banks, 1988); 5) a strong knowledge base regarding the major cultural groups in the United States, and 6) strategies on where and how to access resources to continually increase and update their cultural knowledge. It is believed that teachers' confidence in personal expertise and knowledge is a necessary ingredient to ensure that minority students' culture will be incorporated. Implemented into the curriculum are guest speakers from different cultures who serve as valuable models of diverse life styles and experiences. Personal public school experiences, as related by individuals who went through the school system as culturally different and Limited English Proficient or Non-English speaking

students, appear to be a strong motivational factor for pre-service teachers to incorporate minority students' language and culture into the school program.

C. Increasing the probability to achieve active minority community participation.

Strategies for intervention are based on the hypothesis that teachers' failure to involve the community in the school program is often based on a lack of cultural knowledge, fear for the "different and unfamiliar," and stereotypical assumptions regarding minorities. To ensure that preservice teachers will actively seek minority community involvement an effort should be made to: 1) provide pre-service teachers with a strong cultural knowledge base; 2) encourage their development of multiple perspectives and empathy; 3) increase their understanding of ethnic diversity, power relations between dominant and dominated groups, racism, minority views (Ogbu, 1987) and factors common to all cultures; 4) provide them with research based knowledge of the educational benefits to be derived from community/parent participation (Ladson-Billings, 1990; Cummins, 1986; Campos & Keatinge, 1984; Wong-Fillmore, 1983; Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982; Becker & Epstein, 1982; Epstein & Becker, 1982), 5) expose them to knowledge of successful examples of school/community collaboration projects such as the Haringey project in Britain where children read to their parents at home on a regular basis (Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982). Vital to the successful achievement of this goal is the critical analysis of power relations; and 6) a motivation to become personally involved with research projects to improve: a) community school relationships, b) remove the burden of "acting White," and c) the need for confrontational practices (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Velez, 1989). Successful school/parent/community relations depend largely on teacher attitude, personal desire and enthusiasm to work with the parent and the community, and the extent to which he/she is willing to take the initiative and the

responsibility to develop productive, positive relationships. Presentations by persons representing different cultural/ethnic groups are essential to help pre-service teachers to clarify misconceptions, confirm readings, and diminish fear for the "unfamiliar."

D. Increasing the probability that an intrinsic motivating pedagogy which encourages minority students to generate their own knowledge will be used.

Strategies to achieve this goal are based on the hypothesis that the neglect of using an interactive pedagogy could be attributed in part to 1) a lack of knowledge of any other model besides the transmission model (Barnes, 1976; Wells, 1982), and 2) an unawareness of the negative effects of that model (Cummins, 1984; Ramphal, 1983; Beers & Beers, 1980; Coles, 1978). To intervene, students need to be exposed to a variety of research studies which illustrated the reciprocal interaction model of pedagogy (Daiute, 1985; Cummins,1984; Wong-Fillmore, 1983; Graves, 1983; Wells, 1982; Bullock Report, 1975). Gaining a basic understanding of the benefits and rewards of genuine dialogue between teacher and student, the use of meaningful language as opposed to factual recall, and guidance and facilitation as opposed to teacher control is essential in motivating teachers to minimize their use of the more familiar transmission model.

E. Increasing the probability of teachers becoming advocates for minority students when involved in assessment procedures.

Also that they may act as barriers to tendencies to legitimize the location of the "problem" in the students without sufficient investigation into possible problems inherent in cultural conflict situations (Cummins, 1986, Cazden, 1985). Inherent in the achievement of this goal is the necessity to develop students' analytic and evaluative abilities to confront issues such as participatory democracy, racism, and the parity of power. It is necessary,

for example, to consider 1) Cummins' assertion (1986) that basic change is needed in the underlying structure of traditional psychological assessment processes, 2) that the pathology may, in fact, be located in societal power relations and specific educational and social conditions (Arias, 1986; Suzuki, 1984), 3) the possibility that discriminatory assessment is virtually inevitable, 4) the disproportionate placement of minority students in "learning disabled" (Reschly, 1988; Ortiz & Yates, 1983), "mentally retarded" (Clark, 1985), and "emotionally disorder" (Yates, 1987) categories; 5) the disproportionate tracking of minority students in noncollege curricula (Arias, 1986; Oakes, 1982, 1985) and the crucial role classroom teachers play in these decisions (Jones & Wilderson, 1976). Teachers need to consider the affective and social effects of tracking (Haller, 1985; Oakes, 1985; Pallas, 1984; Oakes, 1982; Eder, 1981), its implications for students' future academic options (Arias, 1986; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986; Rosenbaum, 1976); and the slight mobility between tracks (Mackler, 1969); and 6) that it is not only minorities who are in need of an advocate, but also the "poor White." This "invisible" group of children are often subjected to rules which operate to their disadvantage, shut out of the political and social life of the school, and forced into isolated groups (Selakovich, 1978).

RESULTS

Results on the questionnaire, the goal selection instrument, and student testimonies indicated an increase in cultural sensitivity, and a realization of the necessity to incorporate minority students' culture and home language into the school program, of the importance of parent and community involvement in the educational process, and of helping students to become active generators of knowledge instead of passive receivers. Students also showed an awareness of the inherent danger of legitimizing the location of the academic problem within the minority student. In general, students appeared to be highly motivated to

become effective teachers in pluralistic classrooms. Feelings expressed ranged from cautious optimism to actively looking forward to teach children of different cultures and to be instrumental in establishing positive relationships.

SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FIELD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Demographic changes in our country and massive minority student failure are evidence of the need for visionary leadership in teacher education. Effective preservice teacher training in multicultural education may become one of the most important factors in the improvement of minority education in this country. The literature does not provide much guidance regarding multicultural education curriculum or instructional procedures (Sleeter & Grant, 1987). An instructional methodology of multicultural education based on research findings is needed in colleges of education. It is necessary to know what methods instructors are using, the reasons why, and what students' reactions are. This paper makes a contribution towards this goal. A follow up study is planned to determine to what extent students were incorporating their learning and training into their actual classroom teaching, their relationships with parents and community and their role in assessment procedures of at risk minority students. If it is found that their training is indeed translated into positive application which resulted in altered relationships between educators and minority students and between schools and minority communities the viability of Cummins' framework for intervention could be established.

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